

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HEIDI REED HONORED BY EASTER SEALS FOR HER WORK WITH DISABLED

Easter Seals has honored Massachusetts Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH) Commissioner Heidi Larson Reed as this year's recipient of the Frederick E. Berry Expanding Independence Award.

"This award recognizes Commissioner Reed's success in furthering the advancement of people with disabilities through her professional achievement, community activism and her own example," said Easter Seals Massachusetts President Kirk Joslin. "Her work as commissioner has had significant impact on thousands of deaf, late deafened and heard of hearing people in Massachusetts. Her vision has fired the imaginations of people with and without disabilities."

Reed directs MCDHH in serving as the state's centralized resource for communication access, providing specialized programming and effecting public policy on behalf of people of all ages who are deaf, oral deaf, late-deafened, and hard of hearing.

"It is a true honor to share the mission of expanding independence for all, and to be in the company of the very distinguished recipients who previously received this award," said Commissioner Reed. "I know them and they are my heroes."

Past recipients of the award named for its first recipient, Massachusetts Senator Frederick Berry, include Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commissioner Elmer Bartels, U.S. District Court Judge Reginald C. Lindsay and Christine Griffin, executive director of the Disability Law Center.

"Easter Seals is always at the table in supporting the concerns of people who have disabilities," said Reed.

Reed has served as MCDHH commissioner since September 2002 and is pre-lingually deaf. She holds a bachelor's degree from William Smith College and a master's degree from Gallaudet University. She and her husband Raymond live in Boston.

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